

Message Text

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ORIGIN EUR-12

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PM: CAPT. PASZTALANIEC

DOD/OP-616: CAPT. HURT

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

INFO AMCONSUL LENINGRAD

DIA

CINCEUR/J2

CNO/OP-06

CINCUSNAVEUR

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COMNAVINTCOM ALEX VA

FOSIF ROTA SPAIN

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 189297

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MILI, US, UR

SUBJECT: MFA PROTEST OF BUZZING BY U.S. NAVAL PLANE OF
SOVIET SHIP

REF: MOSCOW 8552

1. FYI. DOD CONFIRMED THAT USN ORION AIRCRAFT ON JUNE 11
MAINTAINED SURVEILLANCE OF SOVIET SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH
VESSEL PROFESSOR ZUBOV IN NORTH ATLANTIC, B T FOR FIFTY-
EIGHT MINUTES (111540-111638Z) VICE ONE HOUR FIFTY-FIVE
MINUTES (1340-1535 LOCAL) CLAIMED BY SOVIETS. DURING OVER-
FLIGHTS AMERICAN AIRCRAFT MADE A NUMBER OF PASSES TO PHOTO-
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GRAPH PROFESSOR ZUBOV. PHOTO ANALYSIS INDICATES THAT

CLOSEST POINT OF APPROACH HAS THREE HUNDRED SIXTY-EIGHT FEET. NAVY AIRCRAFT ALSO CARRIED OUT ROUTINE SEARCH FOR SUBMARINES IN VICINITY OF PROFESSOR ZUBOV, DROPPING TOTAL OF SIX SONOBUOYS. NO SONOBUOY WAS DROPPED WITHIN EIGHT HUNDRED YARDS OF SOVIET RESEARCH VESSEL. PLANE COMMANDER REPORTED PROFESSOR ZUBOV LAUNCHED MOTOR WHALE BOAT AND RETRIEVED ONE SONOBUOY.

2. DOD ALSO CONFIRMED THAT PROFESSOR ZUBOV HOISTED INTERNATIONAL SIGNAL CODES INDICATING THAT AMERICAN AIRCRAFT WAS QUOTE IN A DANGEROUS POSITION UNQUOTE. NO OTHER ATTEMPT TO COMMUNICATE OCCURRED BETWEEN SOVIET VESSEL AND AMERICAN PLANE.

3. NAVY ADVISED U.S. AIRCRAFT DID NOT RESPOND TO FLAG SIGNALS BECAUSE INTERNATIONAL CODE OF SIGNALS (H.O. PUB 102) NOT ABOARD. NAVY FURTHER ADVISED ATLANTIC FLEET AIRCRAFT DO NOT CARRY H.O. PUB 102. END FYI.

4. ALTHOUGH EXCESSIVE NUMBER OF PASSES BY AIRCRAFT WAS UNNECESSARY AND IMPRUDENT IN CARRYING OUT SURVEILLANCE MISSION, WE DO NOT AGREE THAT AIRCRAFT VIOLATED ARTICLE II OF PROTOCOL TO INCIDENTS AT SEA AGREEMENT AND CONSIDER THERE WAS NO DANGER TO PROFESSOR ZUBOV. HOWEVER, NAVY IS TAKING ACTION TO REEMPHASIZE TO ALL COMMANDERS IMPORTANCE OF PRUDENT SEA AND AIR MANNERS IN CONDUCTING THESE SURVEILLANCE OPERATIONS.

5. EMBASSY SHOULD MAKE LOW KEY RESPONSE TO MFA AT SUITABLE OPPORTUNITY DRAWING ON PARA FOUR ABOVE. SISCO

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